

§ 2520.104a-5

Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20210, or by delivering it during normal working hours to Room N-5644, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC.

(d) *Effect.* This section is effective April 10, 1978, and supersedes prior § 2520.104a-4 published on April 23, 1976 (41 FR 16964).

[43 FR 10151, Mar. 10, 1978; 43 FR 14010, Apr. 4, 1978, as amended at 54 FR 8629, Mar. 1, 1989]

§ 2520.104a-5 Annual reporting filing requirements.

(a) *Filing obligation.* Except as provided in § 2520.104a-6, the administrator of an employee benefit plan required to file an annual report pursuant to section 104(a)(1)(A) of the Act shall file an annual report containing the items prescribed in § 2520.103-1 within:

(1) Eleven and one half months after the close of the plan year which begins in 1975, or December 15, 1977, whichever is later; and

(2) Seven months after the close of any plan year which begins after December 31, 1975, unless extended. See “When to file” instructions of the appropriate Annual Return/Report Form.

(b) *Where to file.* The annual report described in § 2520.103-1 shall be filed in accordance with and at the address provided in the instructions to the Annual Return/Report Form.

[43 FR 10152, Mar. 10, 1978; 43 FR 14010, Apr. 4, 1978]

§ 2520.104a-6 Annual reporting for plans which are part of a group insurance arrangement.

(a) *General.* A trust or other entity described in § 2520.104-43(b) that files an annual report in accordance with the terms of subsections (b) and (c) shall be deemed to have filed such report in accordance with § 2520.104a-6 for purposes of § 2520.104-43.

(b) *Date of filing.* The annual report shall be filed within:

(1) Eleven and one-half months after the close of the fiscal year of the trust or other entity described in § 2520.104-43 which begins in 1975 or December 15, 1977, whichever is later; and

(2) Seven months after the close of the fiscal year of the trust or other entity which begins after December 31, 1975, unless extended. See “When to

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file” instructions of the appropriate Annual Return/Report Form.

(c) *Where to file.* The annual report prescribed in § 2520.103-2 shall be filed in accordance with and at the address provided in the instructions to the Annual Return/Report Form.

[43 FR 10152, Mar. 10, 1978; 43 FR 14010, Apr. 4, 1978]

§ 2520.104a-7 Summary of material modification.

The administrator of an employee benefit plan subject to the provisions of part 1 of title I of the Act, and not otherwise exempt from the requirement to file and distribute a summary plan description, shall file a summary description of modifications or changes described in section 102(a)(1) of the Act with the Secretary no later than the date on which the summary description is required to be disclosed to participants and beneficiaries by § 2520.104b-3.

[45 FR 14032, Mar. 4, 1980]

Subpart F—Disclosure Requirements

(The information collection requirements contained in subpart F were approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1210-0016)

§ 2520.104b-1 Disclosure.

(a) *General disclosure requirements.* The administrator of an employee benefit plan covered by part 1 of title I of the Act must disclose certain material, including reports, statements and documents, to participants and beneficiaries. Disclosure under part 1 takes three forms. First, the plan administrator must, by direct operation of law, furnish certain material to all participants covered under the plan and beneficiaries receiving benefits under the plan (other than beneficiaries under a welfare plan) at stated times or if certain events occur. Second, the plan administrator must furnish certain material to individual participants and beneficiaries upon their request. Third, the plan administrator must make certain material available to participants and beneficiaries for inspection at reasonable times and places.

(b) *Fulfilling the disclosure obligation.*

(1) Where certain material, including reports, statements and documents, is required under part 1 of the Act and this part to be furnished either by direct operation of law or on individual request, the plan administrator shall use measures reasonably calculated to ensure actual receipt of the material by plan participants and beneficiaries. Material which is required to be furnished to all participants covered under the plan and beneficiaries receiving benefits under the plan (other than beneficiaries under a welfare plan) must be sent by a method or methods of delivery likely to result in full distribution. For example, in-hand delivery to an employee at his or her worksite is acceptable. However, in no case is it acceptable merely to place copies of the material in a location frequented by participants. It is also acceptable to furnish such material as a special insert in a periodical distributed to employees such as a union newspaper or a company publication if the distribution list for the periodical is comprehensive and up-to-date and a prominent notice on the front page of the periodical advises readers that the issue contains an insert with important information about rights under the plan and the Act which should be read and retained for future reference. If some participants and beneficiaries are not on the mailing list, a periodical must be used in conjunction with other methods of distribution such that the methods taken together are reasonably calculated to ensure actual receipt. Material distributed through the mail may be sent by first, second, or third-class mail. However, distribution by second or third-class mail is acceptable only if return and forwarding postage is guaranteed and address correction is requested. Any material sent by second or third-class mail which is returned with an address correction shall be sent again by first-class mail or personally delivered to the participant at his or her worksite.

(2) For purposes of section 104(b)(4) of the Act, materials furnished upon written request shall be mailed to an address provided by the requesting participant or beneficiary or personally

delivered to the participant or beneficiary.

(3) For purposes of section 104(b)(2) of the Act, where certain documents are required to be made available for examination by participants and beneficiaries in the principal office of the plan administrator and in such other places as may be necessary to make available all pertinent information to all participants and beneficiaries, disclosure shall be made pursuant to the provisions of this paragraph. Such documents must be current, readily accessible, and clearly identified, and copies must be available in sufficient number to accommodate the expected volume of inquiries. Plan administrators shall make copies of the plan description, latest annual report, and the bargaining agreement, trust agreement, contract, or other instruments under which the plan is established or operated available at all times in their principal offices. They are not required to maintain these plan documents at all times at each employer establishment or union hall or office as described in paragraphs (b)(3)(i), (ii), and (iii) of this section, but the documents must be made available at any such location within ten calendar days following the day on which a request for disclosure at that location is made. Plan administrators shall make plan documents available at the appropriate employer establishment or union meeting hall or office within the required ten day period when a request is made directly to the plan administrator or through a procedure establishing reasonable rules governing the making of requests for examination of plan documents. If a plan administrator prescribes such a procedure and communicates it to plan participants and beneficiaries, a plan administrator will not be required to comply with a request made in a manner which does not conform to the established procedure. In order to comply with the requirements of this section, a procedure for making requests to examine plan documents must permit requests to be made in a reasonably convenient manner both directly to the plan administrator and at each employer establishment, or

union meeting hall or office where documents must be made available in accordance with this paragraph. If no such reasonable procedure is established, a good faith effort by a participant or beneficiary to request examination of plan documents will be deemed a request to the plan administrator for purposes of this paragraph.

(i) In the case of a plan not maintained according to a collective bargaining agreement, including a plan maintained by a single employer with more than one establishment, a multiple employer plan, and a plan maintained by a controlled group of corporations (within the meaning of section 1563(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (the Code)), determined without regard to section 1563(a)(4) and (e)(3)(C) of the Code, documents shall be made available for examination in the principal office of the employer and at each employer establishment in which at least 50 participants covered under a plan are customarily working. “Establishment” means a single physical location where business is conducted or where services or industrial operations are performed. Where employees are engaged in activities which are physically dispersed, such as agriculture, construction, transportation and communications, the “establishment” shall be the place to which employees report each day. When employees do not usually work at, or report to, a single establishment—for example, traveling salesmen, technicians, and engineers—the establishment shall be the location from which the employees customarily carry out their activities—for example the field office of an engineering firm servicing at least 50 participants covered under the plan.

(ii) In the case of a plan maintained solely by an employee organization, the plan administrator shall take measures to ensure that documents are available for examination at the meeting hall or office of each union local in which there are at least 50 participants covered under the plan. Such measures shall include distributing copies of the documents to each union local in which there are at least 50 participants covered under the plan.

(iii) In the case of a plan maintained according to a collective bargaining

agreement, including a collectively bargained single employer plan with more than one establishment, a collectively bargained multiple employer plan, and a multiemployer plan which meets the definition of section 3(37) of the Act, § 2510.3-37 of this chapter, and section 414(b) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 and 26 CFR 1.414(f) (40 FR 43034), documents shall be made available for examination in the principal office of the employee organization and at each employer establishment in which at least 50 participants covered under the plan are customarily working. In employment situations where employees do not usually work at, or report to, a single establishment, the plan administrator shall take measures to ensure that plan documents are available for examination at the meeting hall or office of each union local in which there are at least 50 participants covered under the plan.

(c) *Disclosure through electronic media.*

(1) The administrator of a group health plan furnishing documents described in section 104(b)(1) of the Act through electronic media will be deemed to satisfy the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section with respect to participants described in paragraph (c)(2) of this section if:

(i) The administrator takes appropriate and necessary measures to ensure that the system for furnishing documents results in actual receipt by participants of transmitted information and documents (e.g., uses return-receipt electronic mail feature or conducts periodic reviews or surveys to confirm receipt of transmitted information);

(ii) Electronically delivered documents are prepared and furnished in a manner consistent with the applicable style, format and content requirements (See 29 CFR 2520.102-2 through 2520.102-5);

(iii) Each participant is provided notice, through electronic means or in writing, apprising the participant of the document(s) to be furnished electronically, the significance of the document (e.g., the document describes changes in the benefits provided by your plan) and the participant's right to request and receive, free of charge, a paper copy of each such document; and

(iv) Upon request of any participant, the administrator furnishes, free of charge, a paper copy of any document delivered to the participant through electronic media.

(2) For purposes of paragraph (c)(1) of this section, the furnishing of documents through electronic media satisfies the requirements of paragraph (b)(1) of this section only with respect to participants:

(i) Who have the ability to effectively access at their worksite documents furnished in electronic form; and

(ii) Who have the opportunity at their worksite location to readily convert furnished documents from electronic form to paper form free of charge.

(3) This paragraph (c) applies on or after June 1, 1997.

(d) *Participant and beneficiary status for purposes of section 101(a) and 104(b)(1) of the Act and subpart F of this part.* See §§ 2510.3-3(d)(1), 2510.3-3(d)(2) and 2520.3-3(d)(3) of this chapter.

(Approved by the Office of Management and Budget under control number 1210-0039)

[42 FR 37186, July 19, 1977, as amended at 62 FR 16985, Apr. 8, 1997; 62 FR 36205, July 7, 1997]

§ 2520.104b-2 Summary plan description.

(a) *Obligation to furnish.* Under the authority of sections 104(b)(1) and 104(c) of the Act, the plan administrator of an employee benefit plan subject to the provisions of part 1 of title I shall furnish a copy of the summary plan description and a statement of ERISA rights as provided in § 2520.102-3(t), to each participant covered under the plan (as defined in § 2510.3-3(d)), and each beneficiary receiving benefits under a pension plan on or before the later of:

(1) The date which is 90 days after the employee becomes a participant, or (in the case of a beneficiary receiving benefits under a pension plan) within 90 days after he or she first receives benefits, except as provided in § 2520.104b-4(a), or,

(2) Within 120 days after the plan becomes subject to part 1 of title I.

(3)(i) A plan becomes subject to part 1 of title I on the first day on which an employee is credited with an hour of

service under § 2530.200b-2 or § 2530.200b-3. Where a plan is made prospectively effective to take effect after a certain date or after a condition is satisfied, the day upon which the plan becomes subject to part 1 of title I is the day after such date or condition is satisfied. Where a plan is adopted with a retroactive effective date, the 120 day period begins on the day after the plan is adopted. Where a plan is made retroactively effective dependent on a condition, the day on which the plan becomes subject to part 1 of title I is the day after the day on which the condition is satisfied. Where a plan is made retroactively effective subject to a contingency which may or may not occur in the future, the day on which the plan becomes subject to part 1, title I is the day after the day on which the contingency occurs.

(ii) Examples: Company A is negotiating the purchase of Company B. On September 1, 1978, as part of the negotiations, Company A adopts a pension plan covering the employees of Company B, contingent on the successful conclusion of its negotiations to purchase Company B. The plan provides that it shall take effect on the first day of the calendar year in which the purchase is concluded. On February 1, 1979, the negotiations conclude with Company A's purchase of Company B. The plan therefore becomes effective on February 1, 1979, retroactive to January 1, 1979. The summary plan description must be filed and disclosed no later than 120 days after February 1, 1979.

(b) *Periods for furnishing updated summary plan description.* (1) For purposes of the requirement to furnish the updated summary plan description to each participant and each beneficiary receiving benefits under the plan (other than beneficiaries receiving benefits under a welfare plan) required by section 104(b)(1) of the Act, the administrator of an employee benefit plan shall furnish such updated summary plan description no later than 210 days following the end of the plan year which occurs five years after the last date a change in the information required to be disclosed by section 102 or 29 CFR 2520.102-3 would have been reflected in the most recently distributed